PATTERNS OF THE PAST

How astrology can help you understand your former lives.

By Judy Hall

Karmic astrology shows the credits and deficits you have brought from your former lives into the present. My book *Past Life Astrology* is for beginners to the subject, and *Patterns of the Past* and *Karmic Connections* are for astrologers who want to develop their knowledge further.

Karmic astrology is a little known branch of an ancient and arcane art. It is surprising how much you can learn about your past lives from your birthchart. Whilst I do not believe you can find the fine detail of your former lives from your birthchart, thirty years experience tells me that the arrangement of the planets at the moment of your birth - mapped out in your birthchart - highlights your karmic challenges and pinpoints the ingrained patterns that you have carried over from other lives. It may also give enigmatic hints at where or how you have lived before.
There are some books on karmic astrology that lay down a law: If you have *blah* in *di* you must have been *blad di blah*. Some of them even give dates. I have regressed hundreds of people to their other lives and it has never been as black and white as that! But we have been able to confirm *patterns* that run through several lives and on into the present and this is where karmic astrology can be most helpful..

When I first began to learn astrology, in true Sagittarian fashion I kept asking: "Why? Where does that come from?" To me, the notion of a baby as a totally blank slate 'accidentally' happening to be born at a specific moment in time was nonsense, and so was the idea that a baby's temperament was purely a matter of upbringing. From the moment I looked at my own daughter's face, it was clear to me that a baby was a miniature person right from day one. I also believed that my birthchart was a carefully chosen picture reflecting 'Me'. The very precise patterns and energies of the psyche that the planets represented and the corresponding character traits and psychological dispositions that these indicated could in my view only be a matter of intent.

But what was that intent founded upon? Only when I looked at the idea of reincarnation did I find an answer.

As I see it, we choose that particular moment of birth so that we can lay down the lessons, the credits and deficits, the tendencies and the possibilities with which we will work during an incarnation. A birthchart is a map of our karma - and perhaps I should say here that I see karma as something neutral not 'good' or 'bad'. Our karma is simply the sum total of our actions *somewhere in the past* which will have an effect on our present. Karmic astrology helps us to understand our karmic inheritance and the way our soul wants to grow. So, our chart also maps our karmic potential and purpose.

Sun-sign indications
To understand the working of karma and its implications fully, you need to know the details of your birthchart. But you can get consideration information simply from the sign in which the Sun was placed at your birth. The Sun represents your Self and in Karmic Astrology it also represents what you are trying to develop, the qualities you are trying to incorporate into your eternal being. What your soul - the vehicle for your eternal Self - needs to experience.

If you know your birthchart, then you can look at where the North Node of the Moon is as this indicates your purpose according to the sign in which it is placed.. You can also look at the sign the Moon was in when you were born as this tells you about your past and the deeply ingrained emotional response you have built up over many lives, as does the South Node of the Moon. Your Moon placement also shows what you need to nurture and comfort you.)

From incarnation to evolution

The journey around the zodiac is the journey of incarnation into matter and onto the wheel of karma:

So, the Sun in **Aries** is working on assertion and on becoming centred around one's Self - that eternal part of your being that incarnates again and again in its quest for spiritual growth. In the process, someone with the Sun in Aries often gets accused of being egocentric, selfish and self-absorbed. Rather than being self-centred, what Aries is trying to become 'I'. This is the process of recognising and asserting the Self - a process that has to start with developing a strong ego and the sense of 'Me' that Aries expresses so well. When you have the Moon in Aries, you have already learnt how to be an individual who can assert him or herself and find ways of getting emotional needs met. Karmic issues associated with pioneering Aries are to do with aggression versus assertion, and with learning how to initiate and be spontaneous without trampling on too many people in the process. This sign carries the 'knightly' or chivalrous energy forward from the past. It is often associated with the warrior or the pioneer.

The Sun in **Taurus** is working on grounding the Self into the material world, on using one's resources and skills to make one's mark. Pragmatic Taurus is all about being in a physical body and using the five senses to interact with the world - whilst recognising that there is a spiritual dimension. Someone with the Sun in security-orientated Taurus needs to find the certainty of the eternal Self rather than relying too heavily on material matters such as money or position. When you have the Moon in Taurus, you have already established yourself in the calm centre of the eternal self and found your security there. Karmic issues to do with Taurus are security and values. Lessons revolve around materialism, sense perception and finding your place in the world. Taurus brings things into manifestation, this is the builder and hewer of stone, the tiller of the land and the husbander of animals. But, money-orientated Taurus is also the banker and the manufacturer from the past.

Gemini is the sign of communication. Having found one's Self, the challenge is to communicate that Self out to the waiting world. Gemini is very good at taking small, disparate pieces of information and making a great leap of intuition to reach a new truth. Versatile Gemini is interested in everything and explores many avenues as the soul seeks to understand the world. With the Moon in Gemini, you know how to communicate your emotional needs but do not want to immerse yourself in those emotions. Karmic issues that affect Gemini are to do with truth versus deception. Silvery tongued Geminis can talk anyone into anything and may have much karma to reap because of this. Gemini has been associated with teaching and publishing, with 'spreading the word' - and with inquisitions of all kinds. Witty Gemini is also the jester, the humorist and the player of bit parts.

In **Cancer**, the incarnating soul explores emotions and nurturing. This is the sign of motherhood and the home and family. Cancer is a deeply sensitive sign which may feel slighted or aggravated without due cause. This sign holds onto the past tenaciously and that past may well unconsciously colour the present, especially when it is the moody and

possessive Moon that is placed here. The karmic challenge for this sign is to nurture and then let go; to support others, including one's family, without becoming overly possessive; and to experience and understand the emotional dimensions of life. In Cancer, the Sun may well begin to recognise afresh a soul family from the past. In other lives Cancer has been associated with food and drink, with people's welfare and well-being. This is the universal 'social worker' in any age, the homely cook or the master baker.

With the Sun in **Leo**, the soul is ready to make its mark on the world. This is a creative, heart centred sign and the karmic lessons are concerned with power and creative expression of the spiritual energy. With the Moon in Leo you have claimed your power and know how to live from the heart but may need to avoid the emotional games that you have been caught up in the past. The challenge for Leo is to avoid being bombastic, arrogant - and bossy. Leo may well have been connected with the 'dictator energy' in the past, this is a sign that has ruled over many subjects and subjected many to its rules. On the lighter side, it is the born actor and the natural entertainer.

With the Sun in **Virgo**, the soul is learning about service and discrimination. This is the sign that sifts through to find the nub of the matter. With the Moon in Virgo you may have been caught up in the issue of celibacy versus sexuality. This Moon is the eternal perfectionist. The challenge is to avoid being over-critical and setting standards that are impossible to reach in the soul's search for perfection. The karmic purpose of Virgo is to give disinterested service that comes from the heart. This is the good and faithful servant, the able administrator and steward, the cleaner and organiser of life. But Virgo is also the craftsperson. Many of our most beautiful objects were made by a Virgo in a past life. With its strong connection with grain and the harvest, Virgo may well be the field-hand, the mill-owner, the hay-maker - or the brewer of beer.

With the Sun in **Libra** the soul is ready to enter into relationship with another, with the Moon in Libra the soul has spent lifetimes working on relationship issues and sublimating one's own needs in favour of the partner. The challenge is to avoid losing one's self in that other. The karmic purpose is to find the inner balance and harmony that enables one to take one's whole self into relationship. But Libra also has to create harmony and beauty all around. This is a sign that has strong connections with decision making but always sees the wider picture (which is why Libra can never make up its mind). Past life associations with Libra are diplomacy and negotiation, the marriage broker, the interior decorator and the courtesan.

By the time the Sun is in **Scorpio** the soul is ready to explore some very dark places indeed. When the Moon is in intense Scorpio it has gone through a great deal of trauma and drama but has learned how to survive. This is the sign of birth, death and rebirth - and the shadow side of humanity. This fearless sign goes into all the taboo areas of life. Its karmic purpose is to find the insights there that will lead to its own and other's healing. The karmic test is mastery of power and the challenge is to avoid becoming embroiled in 'power-over' struggles with others. The past life connections are to do with alchemy, medicine and healing; with murder and policing, anything clandestine, and with the occult in all its manifestations.

Sagittarius is the sign of the zodiac that seeks the deeper meaning of life. With the Sun in free-spirited Sagittarius a soul will be on a quest for understanding. The challenge for Sagittarius is to keep this quest focussed and grounded. So often Sagittarius aims arrows it knows not where. The karmic key for this adventurous sign is the recognition that one has to live the questions before one can find answers. The Moon in Sagittarius is the courtesan's moon, enjoying emotional encounters without commitment. Many of the past lives associated with Sagittarius come from its ruler, Jupiter. So, the priest, the

philosopher, the teacher and the gambler are all manifestations of the Jupiterian urge to expand. So too is the explorer. Sagittarius has always been associated with horses so these animals tend to play a large part in Sagittarian former-lives.

For **Capricorn** the challenge is to find the outer life stability and the inner spiritual authority that will enable the soul to participate in society without being overly restrained and held within the boundaries of that society. In Capricorn the Moon is cool and restricted, often fearing the emotions and not knowing how to share feelings. Capricorn is a sign that needs to reconnect to the soul's wisdom and use that to become a wise mentor for humanity. An evolved Capricorn soul is as much at home in the spiritual realm as in the physical. The sea-goat (Capricorn's symbol) is rooted in the instinctual, fluid realm of the unconscious (repository of humanity's karmic inheritance) and can move between this and rational consciousness with ease. Capricorn lives tend to centre around authority and the establishment. So the captain of industry or commerce, the lawyer, judge, churchman, administrator, teacher, law-giver and keeper, and those in the higher echelons of power will have a strong Capricorn feel to their lives.

When a soul chooses to be born with the Sun in **Aquarius**, it is seeking revolution and evolution. This humanitarian sign can see further than most and recognises that change is essential if the soul and society are to grow. The Moon placed in Aquarius is in a cold and lonely place, cut off from emotions and feelings and acting as the onlooker or the outcast. The karmic challenge for Aquarius to be free-thinking and innovative without destroying society in the process. The karmic purpose is to break out of the confines of the past in a way that benefits humanity. On the other hand, Aquarius can become stuck in some extraordinary ruts. A natural-born hippy, Aquarius is just as much at home with aliens as it is with humanity en masse but may find one to one encounters intimidating. Past life scenarios include the revolutionary, the scientist, the humanist, the astrologer and Renaissance Man.

It is said that when the soul enters **Pisces** it is an opportunity to move off the eternal round of the karmic wheel. The karmic purpose of Pisces is to achieve enlightenment and at-one-ment. The tendency is towards atonement, however. The Moon is Pisces is intuitive, immensely sentimental and acts as the great escaper. The enormous challenge Pisces faces is in not simply finding a means of escape from the world (be it a bottle, an illusion, an ideal or a fantasy). Pisces is prone to slipping into saviour-victim-martyr scenarios. The delusion is that it can save the world (or even one other person). The reality then becomes victimhood or martyrdom. So, the soul with the Sun or Moon in Pisces must detach from the emotional undercurrents that can so easily trap it, and rise above these to become one with the overriding spirit from which it came. Past life scenarios can include carers of all types, those who have taken up the religious life, artists and poets, and, of course, saviours and martyrs. Pisces is the psychic sign and so witches and warlocks, especially those who have suffered for their arts, feature strongly in Piscean past lives.

The karmic light of the Moon

Everyone has the Moon placed in one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. Knowing where your Moon (or the South Node of the Moon) is keys you into your past - a very familiar territory. This is your inbuilt emotional patterning. You have been here many times before in your other lives. So your Moon sign is the instinctual approach you will take, especially on an emotional, feeling level. This can of course be very different from your more rational, Sun-sign approach to life. Although you will never grow out of your Moon sign, you are trying to evolve out of the automatic emotional reaction of the Moon (or South Node). To become more conscious of the choices and responses available to you rather than reacting blindly in the way you have done for lifetimes. So, for example, someone with the Moon in Aries will have been highly independent in the past whereas someone

with the Moon in the opposite sign Libra will have been extremely dependent on a partner. Now according to the energies of the Sun-sign, they will be trying to move away from that old pattern and experience something new.

Karmic patterns

The geometric relationship ('aspects') of the personal planets (Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus and Mars) and the outer planets (Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto) in your chart show you the type of karma you are dealing with:

Sun: issues of self worth and value and fathering
Moon: emotional and mothering
Mercury: mental and communication
Venus: love and relationship
Mars: will and assertion

Each will be seen from a different perspective according to the energy of the heavyweight planets relating to it. The type of aspect shows how long you have been working with these issues. Planets at right angles to each other or opposite each other describe strong and ingrained karma. Saturn square Venus for example indicates a long battle with an inherent belief that "I am not lovable", "I don't deserve love". Lives attached to this may well include 'prostitution' in the sense of selling your soul in a loveless marriage for the sake of security or similar situations, or even actual prostitution. This contact may also be describing an old vow of celibacy that is intruding into the present relationship and which may need revoking. Either way, this aspect is a challenge to love yourself. When Saturn moves into trine (120°) your experience has subtly shifted. Towards the end of your last life, or in the between-life state, you have recognised that not only do you deserve love but also that you are able to love yourself. Now the challenge is to put that into practice.

If it is Neptune that is aspecting Venus, you have been working on what is known as the Madonna-Whore dilemma. You will no doubt have had several lives of religious seclusion where you suppressed your libido and others where you explored your sexuality in all its facets. In your present life you may notice a decided tendency towards putting your beloved on a pedestal and expecting him or her to be superhuman: 'perfect'. Disillusion quickly sets in when the all-too human foibles are exposed. This is an old pattern. The challenge is to integrate spirituality with sexuality and love the object of your affections with unconditional love.

Aspects to your Moon from those karmic heavies the outer planets show specific emotional patterns that you have carried over life after life. This is particularly true of the so-called 'outer planets' (Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto). It was these aspects that led me back in the beginning when I was learning astrology to ask "Well, where did that pattern come from?" So, for instance, the Moon in aspect to Pluto indicates some pretty powerful karmic stuff about mothering and being mothered, which is why I wrote my longest and most detailed book, *The Hades Moon* on this complex combination. There is a peculiar intensity about Pluto that doesn't let you off lightly. In your other lives you will have experienced abandonment, rejection, persecution and the archetypal figure known as 'the devouring mother' - in other words heavy mother issues. You will probably have experienced difficulty in being born and in giving birth. Death may be attached to birth - either your own death or the emotional trauma of the death of a child.

My own strong Pluto-Moon contact goes from Pluto just behind the Ascendant (the face we show to the world and the point where we start out on incarnation) to the Moon in the Fourth House of the Mother (one of a pair of parental houses, the other being the Tenth House). I was the product of a very long difficult labour myself and when I gave birth to my daughter both of us almost died. During that near-death-experience, I

relived dying in childbirth in a former life and was told that I had opted out of some important lessons then and was doing so again and I would have to come back and go through it all again if I died. I stayed! (Interestingly enough, some years later a man came up to me and said: "You were my mother and you died and left me!" He described exactly the scene I saw during my NDE. He had been one of my children and was left to bring them up when I died.)

If you are now a woman and you have a Moon-Pluto aspect in your present life, these difficulties may have carried over as a 'body memory' (depending on the placement in the chart) resulting in PMS or difficult pregnancy or problems in conceiving. If you are presently a man, you are most likely to experience the mothering difficulties associated with this aspect through your mother or your partner but, as we all change sex from time to time during our incarnations, part of your soul will also have known the feminine side of this experience.

Karmic Houses

Your birthchart is divided up into different areas known as 'Houses' (see illustration).

These equate to spheres of life. Whilst all the Houses have a karmic tinge to them, certain Houses are strongly karmic. For instance, the **Second House** in the chart shows the karmic resources you have brought back with you (money to spend on your karmic credit card so to speak). Planets placed here show the skills, talents and resources you have accumulated over other lifetimes. If you are someone who can visualise things and they come into being, or who always has money or finds that help arrives at just the right moment, then you probably have Jupiter placed here and have been working on abundance in the past - many spiritual disciplines taught their students how to manifest their needs - Christianity is perhaps the only religion that equated poverty with the 'good' life. If you have poverty consciousness and don't feel worthy of abundance, then it is a pretty safe bet that you took a vow of poverty somewhere in the past and your wonderful expansive cornucopia that is Jupiter is being sat on rather heavily by the finger-wagging Lord of Karma Saturn who is saying "Remember that vow!" A bit of creative reframing and renegotiating of that vow might be called for here!

The **Sixth House** in the chart shows our 'body karma', the dis-ease of our soul. So for instance if we go back to that Pluto-Moon example, this could well be where Pluto or the Moon is placed, indicating that our body is carrying 'gynaecological karma' or a memory of past deaths in childbirth etc. Saturn placed in the Sixth House often indicates chronic illness. If Pluto or Neptune are placed here, the disease almost certainly has strong karmic causes and will be difficult to track down in the present life. When Jupiter is in the Sixth House, especially when in contact with Saturn, there was almost certainly old abuse of the body in one form or other (over-eating for example).

The **Seventh House** is the relationship house (relationships in the widest sense of the word). This sets out your track record in the past, and indicates issues you have to work on now. If Neptune is placed here, whilst you search for perfect love you may well have suffered from illusions and delusions in the past. Neptune usually indicates a few veils that need to drawn back. If Pluto sits here, you will reap the repercussions of ancient power struggles.

The most karmic house of all is the **Twelfth House**. When we set out on our journey of incarnation, we stand on the Ascendant looking out around our chart. The Twelfth House is immediately behind us. This hidden House is the deficit on our karmic credit card. Whatever planets lurk here, they have a karmic lesson for us. We have issues connected to the qualities of the planet. So, Mars is aggression and assertion, Venus love and eroticism, Mercury the mind and communication.

This is one of the Houses that may give you an indication of where you may have been in the past. If you have Uranus here, you will have been present at many upheavals and revolutions (social and earth based). You may well have been at the Fall of Atlantis or the French Revolution. I have noticed a strong correlation between people with 'priestly' memories - especially of Egypt - and Jupiter placed in the Twelfth House.

If Pluto or the Sun lurk in the Twelfth House, we can expect memories of being 'important'. King, Emperor, Bishop, Pope, General or any of the minor manifestations of these roles will feature. Pluto placed here has often been the doctor or healer in the past and may well have brought a vocation or hidden talent into the present life but Pluto is also associated with war. Plutonian power happens behind the scenes. People with the Sun in the Twelfth House have had important positions in the past but somehow seem fated not to gain the recognition they deserve this time around. It is as if they are having to experience anonimity as a balance against the fame and adulation last time around. For instance, an opera singer with the Sun in the Twelfth House was immensely talented. But somehow she was always a supporting player or the understudy, never the star. When she went to Russia, she recognised herself in an old book. She had been a singer at the turn of the century who found great fame and adulation in Paris. She had already tasted success.

Karmic dilemmas

There are planetary pointers in the chart to past lives, particularly those at opposite ends of experience. We have already looked at Neptune Venus. Neptune-Saturn is what is known as the 'Mystic-Pragmatist dilemma'. There will have been Neptunian lives of spirituality, mysticism and escapism, and there will have been Saturnine lives of practicality, limit and restriction. Saturn follows the rules and dogma of a religion. Neptune experiences spiritual oneness with the universe. Saturn, the Lord of Karma does like to keep our nose to the grindstone. When Saturn clashes with Jupiter we get miserly lives, and we get over-the-top spendthrift lives where we are not afraid to take a gamble. Contraction opposes expansion. Put Saturn and Uranus together and it is like trying to drive with one foot on the brake and one on the accelerator. This is a change-maintenance dilemma. Unconventional, changeable Uranus is an unpredictable catalyst trying to bring in a revolution of consciousness. Saturn tries to maintain the status quo at all costs. So we can picture lives as a teacher, administrator, law-enforces versus lives as a scientist, revolutionary or inventor.

The psychic General

The first birthchart I ever saw was put up as an example in my astrology class. Typically for me, I attended an intermediate class before the beginners. I hardly knew what the glyphs (signs) meant, but I could read a chart. When asked what struck me about this chart I said:

"He's a General with the soul of a poet."
"Quite so" said my tutor.

Second World War General George S. Patton felt fated almost from birth to be a fighter and a leader of men. As a small boy, he would march about wielding his toy sword on which he had emblazoned: Lt. Gen. G.S. Patton. He believed he had begun his training for this great destiny on the plains of ancient Troy and continued with Caesar's Tenth Roman Legion and then on through recent history. He was also a poet. In l944 he wrote:

So as through a glass and darkly
The age long strife I see

Where I fought in many guises
Many names - but always me.

And I see not in my blindness
What the objects were I wrought
But as God rules o'er our bickerings
It was through His will I fought.

So forever in the future,
Shall I battle as of yore
Dying to be born a fighter
But to die again once more.

His Moon is in authoritarian Capricorn, powerful Pluto sits in his karmic Twelfth House. As a commander he was feared and respected. Almost court-martialled for brutality to his men, they would do anything for him. He has 'aggressive' karma through his Pluto to Mars aspect that has seen the use, abuse and misuse of power in all its manifestations. He has been in authority many times in the past. His Sun is in masterful Scorpio, co-ruled by the warrior planet Mars and by Pluto the Lord of Fate. His North Node of the Moon is in Virgo, he was here to be of service to mankind. His South Node in Pisces gave him the psychic ability to be aware of his past lives. It may also in part explain his poetic soul. What struck me was his Twelfth House Neptune, which tends to evade human suffering if at all possible. The past lives he was not quite so forthcoming about would undoubtedly have been much more artistic and spiritual in character, and he may well have escaped from the world into a religious order. He has the past-life dilemma of having handed his will over to God (Saturn-Mars and Neptune-Mars) and needing to take it back. Certainly those lines in his poem: "But as God rules oe'r our bickerings, It was through His will I fought" take little responsibility for the results of his actions and is typical of both Neptune and Pisces as well as having made a vow of obedience to God in a past life which is still being lived out in the present life.

So, astrology can give us many useful pointers to our past lives and what we have carried over into the present. To find the detail of our lives we need spontaneous recall, far memory, or regression. I combine astrology and far memory in the karmic readings I do and the most common reaction I have from clients is: "Yes, that rings true. It touches something deep within me and illuminates my past and my present purpose." Personally, I do not think we can ask for more.